

MADONNA HOUSE

Gypsies lived in our house in a
Spanish neighborhood before we
Moved in. One day the drunken
Bunch Bar-B-Q'd a Doberman
Pinscher in the back yard. In their
Celebration, one painted a Madonna
Mural on the east-facing side of
The house.

When we moved into the house two
Years ago, we left the Madonna.

Our house is the only one on the
Block that's been untouched by either
Rival gang's spray can graffiti.

-- d. h. lloyd

Long Beach CA

THE OREGONIZATION OF RAIN

"What are you going to do in Oregon this summer?"

"If it falls on a Sunday, I think I'll play golf."

Lifers call it Diane Arbus grey.
And we've been famous for it
Since our written history began.
"Vile, thicke, and stinking fogges,"
Grumbled Frankie Drake in 1579.
Cape Foulweather was named in 1778
By a wet and whining Jimmie Cook.
And in 1805, Billy Clark
Of Lewis and Clark fame, bitched:
"Eleven days rain and the most
Disagreeable time I have experienced."

Later, our writers fretted about it:
Bernie Malamud called the Oregon rain
"Ubiquitous, continuous, monotonous, formless."
H. L. "Honey" Davis complained:
"The rain never stops -- and the light never quite starts."

And Kenney Kesey quipped:

"The rain is there -- it will not go away."

Even our word Oregon appears to come
From the French word ouragon meaning "violent storm."

But now listen, I tell you,
The rain does have its advantages:
It makes us appreciate the sun,
It promotes social and political moderation
(Just look at all those fanatics who live in the desert).
It provides us with a supporting ecosystem
(We don't have to steal our water from somewhere else).
And then, it brings us closer together --
A sort of common enemy.
And then, too, it gives us
Something to joke about
("Oregonians don't tan -- they rust").

But you, a refugee from Los Angeles,
Here only two rainy weeks,
Are not joking at all
When you turn to me and say:
"Now just when is this
Damn rain going to stop anyway?
And who's this Diane Arbus chick?
Another one of your ex-girlfriends?"

ANOTHER BEDSIDE HISTORY OF ANGST

"It's always something."

-- Roseanne Roseanadanna

No matter how many times
I blow my nose
It tweaks itself
And keeps on
Whistling and whistling
Like the soundtrack
From some spaghetti western.
"Too bad you're not in politics,"
Jokes my nose doctor,
"You could have a great
Whistle stop campaign!
But seriously," he frowns,
"You're not just whistling Dixie --
It's all in the alignment